



Social Media Report: Our First 30 Days

15 July 2014

Background

- The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) began exploring social media in 2010. With then-Director Panetta's approval, OPA launched CIA's YouTube and Flickr accounts. During that time, as a way to continue expanding its public reach, OPA also launched mobile and foreign language microsites.
- OPA reignited its social media initiative in mid-2013, this time focusing on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Google+.
- The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) launched official CIA Twitter and Facebook accounts on Friday, **6 June**. **By all accounts, the 6 June launch was a resounding success.**
- In partnership [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], OPA will launch a Google+ account in Fall 2014. At that time, OPA also plans to launch an official CIA Instagram account.

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Twitter Launch

- CIA's first tweet – “We can neither confirm nor deny that this is our first tweet” – was the **second-highest retweeted inaugural tweet in Twitter history.**
 - CIA's inaugural tweet was dubbed witty, funny ... and “perfect”:
 - Genius social media person/team. ♥♥♥ good tweets! [#daymade](#)
 - Well done on your first tweet [@CIA](#). Now following you as you are undoubtedly following me.
 - [@CIA](#) Congratulations! Your next mission is to instagram your lunch. Don't forget to redact part of it. ;)
 - The [@CIA](#) just joined Twitter less than an hour ago, and they're gaining followers at an average rate of 1000 per minute.
 - Hey, I knew it was gonna be a weird Friday, but I didn't think the [@CIA](#) would start a twitter account. Wonders never cease...
 - Whoever came up with this line as the first tweet out of [@CIA](#) deserves a box of macaroons for cleverness beyond the call of duty.
 - This has to be the best tweet in the history of tweets. Congrats [#CIA](#). Welcome to Twitter [@CIA](#), you win best first tweet [pic.twitter.com/9vm5r0Pg3h](#)
 - [@CIA](#) do you think the KGB would be down to join twitter too ?
 - RT [@CIA](#): We can neither confirm nor deny that this is our first tweet. | Best first tweet EVER :-)
 - On the first day, CIA's tweet was retweeted around the world with multiple retweets in the U.S., Europe, Central America, South America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.
 - “The CIA” started “trending” on Twitter within the first hour of launch.
- CIA's second tweet – “Thank you for the @Twitter welcome! We look forward to sharing great #unclassified content with you – was retweeted 15,000 times and favorited 18,000 times. Its engagement rate topped 840 percent.
- The majority of the conversation over the first two days (about 87 percent) involved the retweeting or restating of the CIA's first tweet.
 - Roughly 10 percent added their own positive commentary, generally applauding the CIA's “sense of humor.”
 - Only 3 percent of posts could be classified as negative, which were, for the most part, expressed through another type of humor: sarcasm.

Twitter Engagement

- At the time of the initial launch, @CIA was gaining **at least 1,000 followers per minute.**
- Within the first **two hours**, @CIA had more than **100,000 followers.**
- Within the first **36 hours**, @CIA had **more than 500,000 followers.**
- Within the first 30 days, the inaugural tweet:
 - Made **5,010,672 million** impressions.*
 - Was **retweeted 302,680 times.**
 - Was **favorited 189,258 times.**
- Within the first 30 days, CIA gained **631,000 followers**, surpassing most government agencies to include the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, the Library of Congress, the four military branches, the DIA and NGA. Most of these agencies have been on Twitter for at least four years.

**An impression as the number of "eyes" on the post.*

Twitter Engagement (con't)

- Following CIA's initial two tweets, its most popular tweets to date:
 - **2 July, with 1.2 million impressions:** "Remember reports of unusual activity in the skies in the '50s? That was us. #U2Week #UFODAY <http://t.co/SOIapRR0MX> <http://t.co/dOQjQ6ePxr>"
 - **11 June, with more than 1 million impressions:** "The stage is set. View live webcast on <http://t.co/Jh7dhHnyXM> 8:30am EST #INTELCON <http://t.co/qVqsr5T1f6> <http://t.co/eKC6GgY5aK>"
 - **12 June, with more than 1 million impressions:** "Happy 90th to our former boss @GeorgeHWBush! #TBT Badge photo from his days as CIA Director <http://t.co/zct0Bc2Khg> <http://t.co/yML3JtzFzl>"
 - **4 July, with 950,000 impressions:** "Happy Fourth of July! Wondering about intelligence during the War of Independence? Check out: <http://t.co/6e7UpqCP1r> <http://t.co/nem9ISWNmj>"

“Live Tweeting”

- On 11 June, OPA “live tweeted” D/CIA’s remarks during the “Ethos and Profession of Intelligence” national security conference at Georgetown University.
 - Twitter cited @CIA’s use of “live tweeting” a “best practice” and advises CIA continue to live tweet any event where D/CIA speaks.
 - 20,000 Tweeps unfollowed CIA on 11 June, but CIA also gained 10,000 new followers.
 - For each of the 20 “live” tweets, we saw an average 266 retweets and an average 368,480 impressions, a “remarkable” level of engagement, per Twitter.
 - Throughout the conference, impressions and engagement numbers rose.
 - Twitter touted @CIA’s use of live-tweeting during the conference, “perfect.”

Facebook Launch

- CIA launched its official Facebook page with the following post, "Today we honor the brave Americans who fought and served on this day in history. Did you know former OSSer Virginia Hall played an important role in support D-Day."
- The first post received more than 945 likes and 302 shares.
- Although CIA did not make a dramatic entrance on Facebook as it did on Twitter, followers immediately took to the account to welcome CIA:
 - Hey guys, I've forgot my password to my E-Mail account. Could you help me out? Thanks a lot!
 - i wonder how strong is your password.....
 - Congrats & welcome to FB!
 - Welcom to Facebook !Are you in my computer now !?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?
 - I'm just here to read the comments
 - So Cia you got twitter and facebook whats your instagram and tumblr?
 - I "liked" and "followed" them because I'm pretty sure they've been following me all along ...
 - So, are you guys hiring by any chance?
 - Today I learned that I can't send a friend request to the CIA
 - Welcome to Facebook, CIA. How about that? Now WE can follow YOU.
- CIA's second post was an infographic commemorating D-Day.
 - The image garnered 1,750 likes and more than 230 shares.

Facebook Engagement

- In the first 30 days on Facebook, CIA amassed **68,983 followers**. Additional metrics from CIA's first 30 days:
 - More than **210,000** unique users visited CIA's Facebook page.
 - **1,616,676 unique users** visited CIA's page, saw the page or had the content in their newsfeed or ticker. These can be people who have liked our page and people who haven't.
 - The CIA's Facebook page made **6,290,800 impressions**.*
- CIA has received more than **31,885 likes** on its various posts and **6,156 positive comments**.
- Separately, CIA's Facebook page has been mentioned by 1,862 users on Facebook.

**An impression as the number of "eyes" on the post.*

Facebook Engagement (con't)

- CIA's most popular Facebook posts to date:
 - **17 June, reaching more than 223,000 users:** "It would take 33,707,520 soccer balls to reach from DC to Rio #Brazil2014 #WorldCup #worldfactbook <http://1.usa.gov/UAfNrn>"
 - **6 June, reaching more than 98,600 users:** "Today we honor the brave Americans who fought and served on this day in history. Did you know former OSSer Virginia Hall played an important role in support D-Day."
 - **6 June, reaching nearly 98,000 users (our comments policy):** "CIA welcomes your comments, however we wish to maintain the decorum appropriate to a taxpayer-funded organization, we will moderate, and delete as necessary, comments deemed inappropriate using the guidelines below. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the author(s) being blocked from this page without notice. Do not post graphic, obscene, sexually explicit or racially offensive comments or content. We also will not tolerate comments that are abusive, hateful, slanderous or that are intended to defame anyone or any organization. All content must be unclassified. Do not post any content that may be considered classified, sensitive, or that would cause immediate and undue harm to a person or organization. Do not post advertisements, prize contests or giveaways. Do not post any solicitations (e.g., "like my page") or promotion or endorsement of any financial, commercial or non-governmental agency. Do not post copyrighted or trademarked graphics or images. Do not post comments, photos or videos that suggest, encourage or endorse illegal activity. Do not post documents of any kind. Apparent trolling or spamming will not be tolerated and will be removed. Comments, images or messages that represent criminal activities, intentions or threats will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement officials. This is a public forum and any information provided in comments may be publicly available. Facebook's privacy policies apply. As such, please do not post personal information you do not want available to the general public, nor post personal information of others (such as home telephone numbers or addresses). You post at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information provided. Any references to commercial entities, products, services, or other nongovernmental organizations or individuals that display on the CIA Facebook page may be generated by Facebook and be visible when visiting the CIA Facebook page. CIA does not endorse, support or otherwise promote any private or commercial entity or the information, products or services contained on those websites that may be reached through links on the CIA Facebook page. The CIA is not liable for any loss or damage resulting from any comments posted on this page. If you want to report a crime or suspected terrorist activity, please contact your local police department and/or FBI Field Office. You can also submit information online at: <https://tips.fbi.gov/> Please see our About section for more information."
 - **18 June, reaching more than 84,100 users:** "There is no substitute for juggling multiple classified, time sensitive projects, 12 hours a day, over and over again outside of actually doing it."

CIA on Social Media *in* the Media

- CIA's launch to Twitter was picked up by more than 75 media outlets around the world. Headlines included:
 - **NPR:** @CIA Tweets; Internet Explodes in Not-So-Covert Sarcasm
 - **The Guardian:** CIA Sends Out First Tweet – And Shows It Has a Sense of Humor
 - **CNN:** The CIA sends its first tweet (or not)
 - **The Verge:** The CIA has joined Twitter with the best first tweet possible
 - **Politico:** Twitter spies jokes at CIA account
 - **ABC News:** Spy Tweets: CIA Joins Twitter, Facebook
 - **Huffington Post:** CIA Joins Twitter, And Of Course This is Its First Tweet
 - **Mashable:** Declassified: The CIA Has a Sense of Humor
 - **ZEIT ONLINE:** Geheimdienst: Achtung, hier twittert die @CIA
 - **la Repubblica:** La Cia sbarca su Twitter e Facebook: “Non possiamo confermare ne smentire”

CIA “Rising Tide” Effect

- Since launching its Twitter and Facebook accounts, CIA has seen a dramatic increase in traffic to its other social media platforms:
 - Flickr: 443,194 views (a **5,686 percent increase** from June 2013)
 - YouTube: 40,970 views (a **187 percent increase** from June 2013)
- In addition to normal traffic to the public website, CIA.gov saw an increase in traffic:
 - One Featured Story, for example, saw 11,692 visitors between January and May. With one tweet, however, the same story in June alone had more than **18,000 visitors**. Visitors who clicked on the tweet stayed on the page more than twice as long in June than in the previous months, showing that visitors were engaged and interested in the content.
 - CIA Museum: 12,541 clicks from social media
 - CIA/Georgetown conference press release: 5,907 clicks from social media
 - The World Factbook: 6,479 clicks from social media

Not included: on 7 July (outside the scope of this 30-day report), @CIA tweeted a link to the Careers section, “Yes, We’re Hiring.” The web page saw an additional 85,000 clicks within one week.

IC “Rising Tide” Effect

- Agencies and organizations that followed us – or welcomed @CIA – on Twitter saw a dramatic increase in followers immediately:
 - @DNI doubled its followers
 - @IContheRecord doubled its followers
 - @NGA increased 95 percent
 - @DHS gained a record 9,200 followers in one day; within one week DHS gained 20,000 new followers.
- When @FBI welcomed @CIA to Twitter, the message was retweeted **6,314 times**, more than **four times** the engagement of its most-retweeted message which was during the Boston bombing.

